

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 OES-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 /084 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/PAB:MKBERRY:SO
APPROVED BY NEA:ADOLPH DUBS
NEA/PAB:JPMULLIGAN
IO/IEP:RPOOLE (INFO)
ASIA/PN:BGEORGE (INFO)
OES/NET:LNOSSENZO (INFO)
-----012738 240943Z /21

R 231843Z FEB 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 047008

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS:PDIF, EFIN, PINT, PK

SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MINISTER MEHDI'S CALL ON ACTING ASST
SECRETARY SOBER ON FEBRUARY 21, 1978

REF: STATE 015761

1. PAK EMBASSY MINISTER HAYAT MEHDI CALLED AT HIS REQUEST
ON ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY SOBER ON FEBRUARY 21, 1978.
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY DUBS AND BERRY (NEA/PAB) ALSO
SAT IN. MEHDI RAISED THE FOLLOWING TOPICS BRIEFLY:

A. HE SAID AMBASSADOR YAQUB-KHAN WAS LEAVING ON FEBRUARY
26 FOR CONSULTATIONS IN ISLAMABAD AND WOULD RETURN MID-
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MARCH. NO SPECIFIC REASONS FOR TRIP WERE GIVEN.

B. WHEN A.K. BROHI WAS IN NEW YORK FOR UNGA HE INVITED
AMBASSADOR YOUNG TO VISIT PAKISTAN AFTER MARCH 7-17
ESCAP MEETING IN BANGKOK. MEHDI SAID THAT ON RETURNING
TO ISLAMABAD BROHI DISCUSSED VISIT WITH SECRETARY GENERAL
SHAHI AND FORMAL INVITATION TO YOUNG FROM SHAHI HAD RECEN-

TLY BEEN DELIVERED IN NEW YORK. SOBER RESPONDED THAT WE WERE PLEASED BY PROSPECT OF YOUNG VISIT AND DUBS ADDED WE HOPED THAT SOME UNEXPECTED CRISIS IN AFRICA WOULD NOT CAUSE TRIP TO BE CANCELLED.

ASKED FOR US SUPPORT FOR MAHBUB-UL-HAQ TO BECOME NFW UN DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION (REFTEL). HE SAID HE BELIEVED UN SECRETARY GENERAL WALDHEIM WAS ABOUT TO MAKE HIS SELECTION AND HOPED THAT US WOULD TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION IN RECOMMENDING HAQ. SOBER REPLIED THAT WE HAD INFORMED USUN OF HAQ CANDIDACY AND THEY WERE GETTING INFO ON OTHER CANDIDATES. HE EXPECTED THAT CONSULTATIONS WITH SECRETARY GENERAL WOULD BE HELD SOON.

D. MEHDI PRESENTED COPY OF DIPLOMATIC NOTE WHICH HAD ALSO BEEN GIVEN TO USUN STATING THAT PAKISTAN HAD DECIDED TO SEEK ELECTION TO ECOSOC AND HOPED TO HAVE US SUPPORT. HE ADDED THAT ALTHOUGH PREVIOUS PAK ACTIVITIES IN ECOSOC MAY HAVE BEEN CONTROVERSIAL HE DID NOT THINK THEY WERE DESTRUCTIVE. SOBER SAID HE WAS SURE US WOULD BE PLEASED TO HAVE PAKISTAN ON ECOSOC AGAIN BUT AS WE USUALLY SUPPORTED REGIONAL CANDIDATE, HE HOPED PAKISTAN WOULD BE WORKING TO OBTAIN NOMINATION OF REGIONAL GROUP. MEHDI ASSURED HIM THIS WAS BEING DONE.

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E. MEHDI SAID PAK EMBASSY HAD RECENTLY NOTED THAT AID LEVEL OF \$98 MILLION INITIALLY CONTEMPLATED FOR FY 1978 HAD ACTUALLY DROPPED TO \$52 MILLION (IN CONGRESSIONAL PRESENTATION) AND EMBASSY WOULD LIKE TO GET SOME EXPLANATION FOR THIS EXTREMELY LARGE "CUT" SOBER RESPONDED THAT HE WAS NOT AWARE OF THE DETAILS AND WOULD PROVIDE INFO AT SOME LATER TIME. (COMMENT: AMBASSADOR YAQUB-KHAN RAISED THIS ISSUE WITH OUTGOING ASIA/PN DIRECTOR LEVINTOW AT LUNCH ON FEBRUARY 21. REPORT FOLLOWS SEPTTEL).

2. SOBER RECALLED JANUARY 19 CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR YAQUB-KHAN AND MEHDI (REFTEL) AND GAVE FOLLOWING EXPLANATION TO QUESTIONS RAISED AT THAT TIME:

A. NUCLEAR FUEL RODS -- SOBER SAID THAT OTHERPARTSOF THE DEPARTMENT WERE WORKING ON PROBLEM OF PROVIDING TWO ADDITIONAL FUEL RODS TO PAKISTAN AND HE HOPED A SUBSTANTIVE REPLY WOULD BE AVAILABLE SOON. PART OF THE DIFFICULTY WAS SAID TO BE THAT ONE OF THE INDIVIDUALS MOST CONCERNED WITH ISSUE HAS BEEN OUT OF THE COUNTRY.

B. INDIAN STATEMENTS ON HYDROGEN BOMB -- SOBER SAID WE

HAD ASKED OUR EMBASSY IN NEW DELHI TO LOOK INTO PRESS REPORTS THAT DR. SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY HAD SAID INDIA WAS AT POINT WHERE IT COULD DEVELOP HYDROGEN BOMB. WE HAD LEARNED THAT SWAMY HAD APPARENTLY MADE HUMOROUS COMMENT THAT "MORARJI CONTAINED MORE TNT THAN THE HYDROGEN BOMB" AND WE HAD NO REASON TO BELIEVE REMARK WAS INTENDED AS

ANYTHING MORE THAN WITTICISM.

3. IN RESPONSE TO QUERY BY SOBER ON PRESENT CONDITIONS IN PAKISTAN MEHDI REMARKED:

-- HE EXPECTED ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD IN FALL BUT NO DATE HAD BEEN SET.
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-- THERE HAD BEEN A VERY GOOD WHEAT CROP ESTIMATED AT NINE MILLION TONS.

-- WALI KHAN WAS TOURING THE PUNJAB IN AN ATTEMPT TO SHOW HE COULD BE MORE THAN A REGIONAL LEADER.

-- BHUTTO HAD DECIDED NOT TO DEFEND HIMSELF AT MURDER TRIALS. VANCE

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